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A Poem to the Memory of the
celebrated Mrs. Cibber

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A
P O E M

TO THE

M E M O R Y

OF

The CELEBRATED Mrs. CIBBER.

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OF
THE CELEBRATED
Mrs. C I B B E R.

—*Sideræ Raptus lugebat Alumne.*

CLAUD. de Rap. Prof. Lib. iii.



L O N D O N :
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A
P O E M

TO THE

M E M O R Y

OF

The CELEBRATED Mrs. CIBBER.

WHAT Form is that, which on the mould'ring Heaps
Of Earth, upturn'd from yonder new-made Grave,
In this dim Cloister painful Vigils keeps,
And by distracted Gestures seems to rave?

The Sexton's Lamp still glimmers on the Ground ;
Close at her Side the Axe and Spade are thrown,
And many a human Bone lies scatter'd round,
The nameless Reliques of a Race unknown !

Long

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Long is her fable Robe, and veil'd her Face ;
 Up to the vaulted Roof her Groan ascends ;
 Now something in the Dust she seems to trace,
 Now o'er the Sepulchre dejected bends.

“ Say, thou sequester'd Mourner, whence thy Woe ?
 “ Whence, I exclaim, those Signs of deep-felt Grief ?
 “ Why thus the chearful Haunts of Life forego ?
 “ Why in these lonely Mansions seek Relief ?

“ Ask you, she cries, the Cause of my Despair ?
 “ Will not this Scene the fatal Story tell ?
 “ Mark where yon Train sad Obsequies prepare !
 “ Hear you the Summons of that pausing Bell ?

“ It calls my CIBBER to her House of Clay,
 “ She, who the Passions can no more engage,
 “ Rich in Theatric Glory, snatch'd away,
 “ The darling Daughter of the BRITISH Stage.

“ She

- “ She comes, my JULIET comes---O dire Divorce!
 “ Torn from my Arms by Heav'n's resistless Doom.—
 “ A JULIET chang'd indeed!---a real Corse!
 “ And borne lamented to a real Tomb!”

I turn, and while my Eye the Cloister roves,
 The flaring Tapers pour upon my Sight;
 Solemn and slow the black Proceſſion moves,
 And darts a Terror thro' the Gloom of Night.

Sorrowing, I ſee the holy Rites begin;
 Reſign'd; the ſad ſepulchral Office hear ::
 A thouſand ſoft Ideas ſtir within;
 And aſk once more the tributary Tear.

But when the ſable Pall aſide was flung,
 Who can this Mourner's ſeeming Anguiſh tell!
 As o'er the Margin of the Grave ſhe hung,
 That ſoon muſt cloſe on one ſhe lov'd ſo well!

Eager she seem'd to catch a parting Look,
 Fix'd in expressive Silence o'er the Dead :
 Then sighing deep, the dreary Spot forsook,
 And thro' the monumental Region fled.

“ Might I, thou gen'rous Friend, that Face behold !
 “ Can'st thou a Partner in thy Tears refuse ?
 “ Can'st thou---” but while her Robe I strove to hold,
 Her falling Veil disclos'd THE TRAGIC MUSE.

“ Divine MELPOMENE ! art thou I cry'd,
 “ From Fancy's Regions come this Train to join ?
 “ Tut'refs of virtuous Grief, why seek to hide
 “ Sorrows, which claim Preeminence o'er mine ?

“ Yes, she reply'd, from happier Realms I came,
 “ To see my CIBBER laid in hallow'd Rest ;
 “ By her, while living, I increas'd my Fame,
 “ By her, secur'd my Empire in the Breast.

“ Still

“ Still must my Thoughts the plaintive Theme pursue,
 “ Still in my Mind her fond Remembrance spring ;
 “ Now all her wond’rous Pow’rs rise fresh to View,
 “ And only sharper point Affliction’s Sting !

“ Clos’d are those Eyes which knew each vary’d Art,
 “ And could my Meaning with such Force inspire ;
 “ Call Tears of Pity from the melting Heart,
 “ Freeze with wild Horror, or with Rapture fire !

“ By Death’s cold Hand those Features now are bound,
 “ That once could ev’ry Change of Passion wear !
 “ Mute is that Voice, whose more than magic Sound
 “ Stole like soft Music on the ravish’d Ear !

“ And fix’d those Limbs in fun’ral Weeds array’d,
 “ Us’d to the study’d Elegance of Drefs,
 “ That ev’ry graceful Attitude display’d,
 “ Great as these circling, sculptur’d Forms express !—
 “ Who

“ Who can like her the haughty PYRRHUS bend ?”

“ Or in the Wife of faithless JAFFIER melt ?”

“ Such filial Softness to CORDELIA lend ?”

“ Or shew the Struggles wretched CONSTANCE felt ?”

“ How shall the false CALISTA weep her Fate ?”

“ Or poor deceiv'd MONIMIA now complain ?”

“ Who, ISABELLA, can thy Woes relate ?”

“ Or paint the Tortures of ALICIA's Brain ?---”

“ O gentle CIBBER ! long thy Loss I'll mourn ;

“ And many a time, by strong Affection led ;

“ To this lone Place at silent Night return ;

“ And o'er thy Dust ambrosial Odours shed !---”

“ Yet am I not of ev'ry Hope bereft ;

“ Nor stifled in the Tomb my Taper dies ;

“ Still to relume the Blaze a PRITCHARD's left,

“ Whose Breath shall send it flaming to the Skies.

“ She

“ She can to Nature urge the just Appeal ;
 “ Genius and Judgment both in her are seen ;
 “ She thro’ the Heart’s deep Windings makes us feel,
 “ And adds new Grandeur to the swelling Scene.

“ But while exulting, thus her Pow’rs I praise,
 “ My SPORTIVE SISTER is a Rival there ;
 “ Too frequent from my solemn Path she strays,
 “ And gives the pert Usurper half her Care !---

“ O may she long retain her wonted Fire!---
 “ For should’st thou GARRICK still my Suit refuse,
 “ And from the Stage replete with Fame retire,
 “ Who shall support the drooping TRAGIC MUSE?”

T H E E N D.

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